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## **Secretary Gassman encourages people to request Microsoft vouchers for online computer skills training**

### ***Elevate America program makes online computer training available free to all Wisconsin residents***

MADISON – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today encouraged Wisconsin workers to take advantage of an innovative public-private partnership with Microsoft to provide free technology training across the state. Through the Elevate America program, Microsoft is making a limited number of vouchers available to any Wisconsin resident interested in building their skills through online technology training and certification.

“As the economy continues to recover and new employment opportunities are available, it’s important that people are job ready,” Secretary Gassman said. “These vouchers are one more tool to help workers build needed computer skills to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.”

Starting May 25, a total of 13,500 vouchers were made available in Wisconsin through the Elevate America program, a partnership between Microsoft and DWD. The vouchers included: 6,000 e-Learning vouchers for online training, 6,000 certification vouchers for testing and 1,500 e-Learning vouchers for more advanced professional-level training.

The online training courses build skills in Office 2007 products, including Outlook, Word, Excel and PowerPoint. There is also a free Digital Literacy program providing computer basics for beginners, which is a program that will be available after the Elevate America program ends.

To date, over 4,500 vouchers have been distributed in communities across the state. Remaining vouchers will only be available through August 23, 2010, as all vouchers must be received and activated during this time. Training vouchers are good for individual training courses for one year from the date of activation. Certification vouchers are used on the day of activation.

“Elevate America helps equip people with the crucial technology skills necessary to get a job in today’s competitive workplace,” said Tony Wilson, Microsoft director of Midwest government affairs. “We believe that this type of public-private partnership will play an important role in rebuilding economies by improving basic technology literacy among the workforce.”

Microsoft announced the Elevate America program at the National Governor’s Conference in February 2009. The initiative is expected to provide up to 1 million vouchers nationwide for Microsoft e-Learning courses.

Wisconsin residents who are interested in obtaining a voucher need to register online at [JobCenterOfWisconsin.com](http://JobCenterOfWisconsin.com) with a valid e-mail address and then call the Job Center of Wisconsin Call Center toll-free at 888-258-9966 requesting an Elevate America voucher.